DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 131 062 95 SP 010 622

TITLE Staff Development Workbook for Classroom Teachers and Principals.
INSTITUTION North Dakota Univ., Grand Forks. Center for Teaching and Learning.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Mar 76
GRANT NIE-G-00-0160; NIE-G-3-0979
NOTE 48p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Continuous Learning; Emotional Development; Inservice Programs; *Inservice Teacher Education; Maturation; *Personal Growth; *Self Actualization; Student Teacher Relationship; Teacher Administrator Relationship; Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

Personal growth and professional growth are the main areas of concern dealt with in this workbook. Developed from teacher identified "components of growth," the text is organized around the concepts of awareness/reflection, trust, risk, conflict, working plans, and opportunities for growth. The document is designed to encourage reflection of concerns the user experiences and to stimulate continual development through personal use or with small group discussion. Appendixes contain a discussion of the value of teacher, parent, and child interviews as a basis for staff development and a suggested format for each. (MB)

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ED 131082

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Where can I find support as I reflect upon the uncertainties and questions I have about my teaching?

What are my strengths as a teacher?

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STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKBOOK

FOR

CLASSROOM TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

How can I arrange my day so that I will have time to seek out opportunities for growth?

Why is it so difficult to begin new patterns of doing things?

Center for Teaching & Learning
University of North Dakota
March 1976

How can I put into practice what I believe about children's learning?

How can I know that my teaching practice is really assisting children with their learning?

SP 010 622

This is a staff development document developed as part of a research activity supported by The National Institute of Education (Grant #CO-0160/#3-0979). The document does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of The National Institute of Education and no official endorsement should be inferred.

Some teachers reflect...

"It's really difficult to break away from "teacherese" and talk about what and why teachers need to grow. As a teacher I hear and read about evolving, becoming aware, reciprocating, being supportive, being enthusiastic, and reflecting. I know that kids come to school to say new things, see new things, and do new things-in other words to grow. I'm a teacher-and I need to say new things, see new things, and do new things, too.

I need to talk to someone, think about what I'm doing in my classroom, try new ideas, listen to what the kids are saying-to grow as a teacher! But to whom do I go and what do I do?"

"Five minutes and recess is over. What are we going to do in art class? The last project was a disaster. Why?-Where is that book with the idea about making log cabins for social studies? Do I <u>really</u> know what these kids would like to do? Do I <u>really</u> know what I would enjoy in relation to that topic?

I need encouragement, time, and ways to observe and evaluate what is happening to me and my students. Such observations would help me grow as a teacher."

"All I want is for my outsides to match my insides. This was the internal plea repeated often during my beginnings as an elementary teacher. My head said, 'individualize.' I need another way to help Pete overcome his reading problems. My response--three reading groups instead of two. Kids need to make decisions about their own learning my head said. My response--an hour of free time when kids could choose what they would do and it drove me up the wall when Wayne and Morris chose to watch the fish tank the entire hour. How to do, to organize, to prepare, to allow these inside beliefs to become real, working classroom practice. My insides demanded many things but then when I walked into the classroom something else would happen."

"What do you mean. 'Take time to grow?' It seemed as if my head hardly touched the pillow when "br-ring" went my alarm clock - 6 o'clock. Time to get up. The morning is cloudy and cold and we must have at least 5 inches of new snow. I look outside at all those snowflakes and admire the pretty picture they make. But not for long. I have so much to do - off to school by 7:30. I wonder if Tommy will be at school today. Yesterday he had a terrible day. He seemed to go out of his way to antagonize most of the children. I wonder if his mother is home from the hospital yet. Do you suppose Amy will feel as if she belongs today? She seems so little and scared and tired looking. Her 3rd school this year. No wonder she seems so lost. And so it goes. Busy, busy every moment of the day. I really wish I'd have someone to talk to about Danny. He's been fighting everyday since school started. I wonder what other teachers do when they have someone like Danny in their room. I hope I can find 10 minutes to talk to Marilyn about him - but when? I have recess and noon duty and a curriculum meeting at 3:45 to talk about new spelling books - New spelling books! Danny could care less. Maybe I should talk to his mother. How about after dinner tonight. Is that a good time to call a parent? I wonder how other teachers find time to do all these things. I wish I could discuss working with parents with my principal."

What are some of your thoughts about teaching? Why don't you write them?

Some Introductory Comments

How do we sustain ourselves as "students of teaching"? This has been a serious topic of discussion for large numbers of teachers in North Dakota over the last few years. This workbook is one outcome which we wish to share with others. The workbook is organized around what teachers have identified as Components of Growth. These components are as follows:

Awareness/Reflection

Beginning to wonder, to question, to search, to step back and view ourselves as we actually are.

- **What are my strengths as a teacher?*
- **What do I know about how children learn?*
- **How do my beliefs and attitudes about teaching guide the decisions I make about my classroom practice?*

Trust

Feeling safe enough to experiment, to discuss, to admit problems, to fail, to ask questions, to seek help, to maintain faith in ourselves and in others. Trust develops in an atmosphere where you are known for what you are, understood for where you've been, accepted for whom you've become and still are gently invited to grow.

- **Where can I find support as I reflect upon the uncertainties and questions I have about my teaching?*
- **Are there others with whom I can share ideas, questions and concerns?*

Opportunities for Growth

Being able to recognize the value of new experiences; to create opportunities for growth where they do not seem to exist.

- **Who are the people who can assist me to grow personally and professionally?*
- **How can I arrange my day so that I will have time to seek out opportunities for growth?*

Risk

Gambling that you'll be successful in an attempt to work with children in a different manner. It is taking a chance and leaving yourself open to failure.

- **How do I develop a sufficient level of confidence to take some risks?*
- **Why is it so difficult to begin new patterns of doing things?*

Working Plans

Implementing one's beliefs and intentions about teaching and learning; reflecting about the needs of individual children; organizing materials which support children's learning.

- **How can I put into practice what I believe about children's learning?*
- **What kind of relationship do I want with children? How should I organize the classroom? How should time be organized? What kinds of materials should be available?*
- **How can I divide my really big ideas into parts that are small enough so that I dare to make a beginning? Who can I talk with about my ideas?*

Conflict

Experiencing personal uneasiness and anxiety when dealing with risk-taking. Finding the internal and external resources and strength to resolve puzzling questions and apprehensions.

- **How can I know that my teaching practice is really assisting children with their learning?*
- **How can I respond to the many questions and concerns of my colleagues as well as the parents of children with whom I work?*

While this workbook is organized around the foregoing Components of Growth, we fully expect that those who use this material will consider components of growth that have not yet been a part of our discussions. Growth, after all, is a highly personal process which occurs as individuals find ways to reflect, as well as act, upon their particular experiences. This document, then, is designed not as a model, a how-to-do-it book, but rather, in the style of a workbook, attempts to encourage those who use it to add to the content, to record their own reflections. The workbook contains a variety of thoughts about teacher growth; it also provides some activities which might encourage teacher growth. These are intended to generate reflection about concerns that you have and to stimulate further thoughts about activities that you might find workable in your classroom. It is intended for personal use, for use with small groups of classroom teachers, for use with principals and teachers in a particular school, and with groups of school people from different schools. Teachers and principals interested in an ongoing staff development program may find this workbook a good starting point. Let us know whether you find the workbook useful.*

*A response form is attached to the workbook.

Reflect on some of the quotations in this left-hand column. Which of them relate to your concerns?

AWARENESS AND REFLECTION

Beginning to wonder, to question, to search, to step back and view ourselves as we actually are.

"By a school organized as a center of inquiry, then I imply an institution characterized by a pervasive search for meaning and rationality in its work. Fundamentally, such a school requires that teachers be freed to inquire into the nature of what and how they are teaching."
Robert Schaefer

"This is what we inherit, not the benefits or ills of the past, which are but unimportant details, but the power of time gone before to nourish and sustain us in our own time."
Sybill Marshall

"...successful teaching stems from the teacher's desire for self-fulfillment rather than from his mastery of a collection of techniques."
Philip Jackson

"We have to trust these feelings. We have to trust the invisible gauges we carry within us. We have to realize that a creative being lives within ourselves, whether we like it or not, and that we must get out of its way, for it will give us no peace until we do."
M. C. Richards

"The only actions the teacher can really control are his own; the effects if he creates any - are indirect and are produced through his own behavior...How the teacher behaves depends on his point of view, on his system of belief. It is therefore necessary for the teacher to clarify his beliefs about people and how they learn if he is to behave consistently and in ways that facilitate growth."
Dorothy I. Seaberg

*Investigate teaching and learning from a a variety of points of view.

- visit classrooms in other schools
- visit classrooms in your school
- read professional literature - books, journals, magazines
- share your readings with other teachers

*Think and write down five learning experiences of your own you can recall.

- Why was it important?
- In what setting did it occur?
- Were others involved in the experience?
- Was there anything special about what you learned?
- Was there anything unique about you at that time?
- Draw generalizations about the conditions under which you learn best.
- Share your learnings with someone else.
- Does this help you to look differently at the way children in your classroom learn? (For a more complete account of this exercise, see Teaching Is by M. Harmin and T. Gregory.)

*Design your classroom practices so that you can become more aware of the interests and learning styles of your children.

- pre-school (or early in the school year) conferences with parent and child
- one to one conference with child
- provide choices in curriculum areas (projects in science)
- field trip choices
- provide a broad range of learning materials

to behave thoughtlessly than to ponder one's actions and make conscious decisions, simpler to be carried along by the press of reality than to pause and consider what to do next."

Philip Jackson

"I have perhaps been slow in coming to realize that the facts are always friendly. Every bit of evidence one can acquire, in any area, leads one that much closer to what is true. And being closer to the truth can never be a harmful or dangerous or unsatisfying thing. So while I still hate to readjust my thinking, still hate to give up old ways of perceiving, and conceptualizing, yet at some deeper level I have, to a considerable degree, come to realize that these painful reorganizations are what is known as learning, and though painful they always lead to a more satisfying, because more accurate, way of seeing life."

Carl Rogers

"...experience, though it may be the best teacher, is often insufficient to stimulate continued growth. To achieve that end we must not just have experience; we must benefit from it. This means we must reflect on what happens to us, ponder it, and make sense of it...What is needed, therefore, is both the time and the tools for the teacher to conceptualize his experience, to imbue it with personal meaning in a way that alters his way of looking at his world and acting on it."

Philip Jackson

"'I don't believe it,' said Painted Jaguar. 'You've mixed up all the things my mother told me to do with the things that you asked me whether I was sure that she didn't say, till I don't know whether I'm on my head or my painted tail; and now you come and tell me something I can understand, and it makes me more mixy than before.'"

Rudyard Kipling

for their children.

- ·pre-school conference
- ·visit parents at home
- ·telephone conversations
- ·encourage parents to visit the classroom

*Deliberately, systematically reflect on your classroom practice.

- ·Take 15 minutes at the close of your morning (or day) and write all the important things you can think of that happened in your classroom. Notice how much more observant you become after a week or two.
- ·Use the questions on the Teacher Interview to examine and clarify your classroom experiences. (For a copy of the Teacher Interview and a discussion about its use, see Appendices A and B.)
  - *Describe your classroom. How is it arranged and organized? Why do you have it this way?
  - *In your classroom, how are children involved in making decisions about their learning?
  - *In your classroom, what happens when a rule isn't followed?
- ·Observe some element of your classroom over a long period of time (peer interaction). Keep a log of your observations.

*Document carefully some aspect of your program; for example, reading or creative arts.

- ·Write a statement of purpose.
- ·Keep logs of daily activities.
- ·Maintain samples of children's work.
- ·Interview children.
- ·Meet with parents.
- ·Record your teaching behavior with videotape or tape recording. Review the recording. Make statements about your review. Share this experience with someone else.

What have you come across in your personal reading that has helped you reflect on your teaching? Share it with other teachers.

What other suggestions do you have?

What is the level of trust in your school?

TRUST

Feeling safe enough to experiment, to discuss, to admit problems, to fail, to ask questions, to seek help, to maintain faith in ourselves and in others. Trust develops in an atmosphere where you are known for what you are, understood for where you've been, accepted for whom you've become and still are gently invited to grow.

"The soul is not contained within the body but outside, in the theater of its commitments...No Ajax, no Achilles even, can be the lord of anything, much less know his own worth, save through resonance with others engrossed in those same matters."
David Hawkins

"Meetings also strengthened staff morale, established a sense of project cohesiveness, and broke down the traditional isolation of the classroom teacher."
Paul Berman, Milbrey W. McLaughlin

"Every day Leo's father watched him for signs of blooming.
And every night Leo's father watched him for signs of blooming...
Then one day, in his own good time, Leo bloomed!"
Robert Krause

"The more one feels good about one's self, the less rigid and the more open to change one may be."
Gordon Klopf

"The building of trust is terribly important; it not only lets two people open up to each other, leading to genuine mutual understanding and appreciation, but it is an essential ingredient in the growing process. A reservoir of trust permits bursts of initiative leading toward autonomy."
Donald H. Clark, Asya L. Kadis

*Create a "buddy" system.

- Find at least one other teacher to talk with (at least once a week) about the real concerns you have about your classroom.
- Invite that teacher to visit your classroom and observe something that you would like to know more about (how children use the listening center).

*Share individual strengths and enthusiasms.

- Regular staff meetings which rotate from classroom to classroom - host teacher shares activities, materials and intentions

*Develop a supportive environment.

- In cooperation with teachers, the principal works with children in classrooms.
- Parents work with teachers and children in the classroom.

*Review your feelings about the children in your classroom.

- Do you trust them?
- What does that mean given your group of children?
- How do you demonstrate your trust?
- Notice tomorrow feelings and actions that demonstrate trust or that demonstrate a lack of trust.

"But if I trust the capacity of the human individual for developing his own potentiality, then I can provide him with many opportunities and permit him to choose his own way and his own direction in his learning."

Carl Rogers

"If one really sees a child (or teacher) as a meaning-making agent, then one is obliged to accept, assume, and trust that any concept which a child entertains is in some sense right for him at that moment."

Charles H. Rathbone

"Several members were anxious at first about whether they were teaching in the 'right/correct' way, and it was some time before they could be persuaded that there was no 'right' way."

Ford Teaching Project

A story about trust and other things.

"In the middle of cutting out pumpkins from orange paper one year, I got sick and had to stay home. That was a blow as far as Art was concerned, because I was eager to get to the part where you paste yellow paper on the back so that it looks like candlelight shining through the eyes and mouth. And when I came back two weeks later, Halloween was over and the pumpkin project had been dropped. I was perfectly willing to make a jack-o-lantern in November, but the teacher said no because the class was in the middle of making turkeys for Thanksgiving. She said that if I didn't drop my pumpkin, so to speak, I would be making turkeys for Christmas, Santa Clauses for Valentine's Day, and so on. She said it in tones indicating that there would be something ridiculous about that, so I gave up."

"'In fact,' she said, 'the class is in the middle of turkeys, and I don't know if you can catch up.' It seemed to me co be an excellent time to finish the pumpkin and go directly to Santa Claus, but turkeys it was."

Wally Cox

*Joint projects

- Develop mini-projects around art, rockets, snakes, or back packing from which the children may choose - kids and teachers will have to mix.
- Plan an evaluation process for the school.
- Create and implement a local ecological awareness and action program.
- Plan an all school activity to raise money for a selected cause.

*Create a common workshop area.

- Attempt to facilitate sharing of ideas and materials, as well as just getting to know one another better. (Invite your principal to engage in developing learning materials in the workshop area.)

*Arrange some staff social activities.

- Organize a potluck supper for staff families at school.

Other suggestions?

Do any of these statements address questions you have?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Being able to recognize the value of new experiences; to create opportunities for growth where they do not seem to exist.

"And then it happened. A movement in a tree outside the window caught my eye and there, in the sweet and redeeming light of the springtime world, was a summer warbler building a nest. Caught in wonder I followed the progress of the nest construction and dreamt of the time when I would be a great ornothologist. My i's and o's were forgotten until Mrs. Jones materialized over my shoulder and demanded to know why three lines in my penmanship book were empty. Instinct warned me that no serendipitous warbler, no private fascination, could provide an excuse for the neglect of my serious educational duties. So I bit my tongue, cherished my wonder in silence, and stayed in after school to make up my lessons. Mrs. Jones won more than the day. Schooling became a habit for me and I remained in the classroom for twenty-five years and five degrees without seriously questioning the maxim that <u>private</u> <u>enthusiam</u> must be divorced from the educational task."

Sam Keen

"If the contents of the package are not something the learner can feel about, real learning will not take place. We must attend not only to that which motivates but to that which sustains as well."

George Isaac Brown

"While change may be no more than an external modification, growth is an inner transformation. While change can seize the expedient situation for a dramatic impact, growth must come from a deep-seated probing of problems. Although change can be imposed upon an organization, growth must occur in an individual - and in ways appropriate to the individual."

"The Nurture of Teacher Growth"

*Survey your real interests - the things you do outside of school. Take one of your personal interests into your classroom tomorrow.

*Designate a special time for planning.

- Children come to school on Monday at noon (every other week, once a month) so teachers may use the morning to plan.

*Organize staff development and teacher growth groups in your school.

- A small group of teachers and/or principals get together and discuss particular children and their learning every Thursday afternoon.

*Consult and interact with the board of education.

- Invite board members to visit your classroom.
- Seek support for individual and school programs.

*Survey community resources.

*Use the Teacher Interview (see Appendix B) as a tool for reflection and personal evaluation.

- Use questions from the interview with one other person.
- Use questions from the interview as a base for discussion.

*Use the Parent and Child Interviews (Appendices C and D) to get an idea how these two groups see your classroom - feedback.

"The map is not a substitute for a personal experience. The map does not take the place of an actual journey. The logically formulated material of a science or branch of learning, of a study, is no substitute for the having of individual experiences."

John Dewey

"Great teachers release the energy of their students to discover reality and pursue truth. This doesn't happen if the teacher isn't alive to life."

Frank McLaughlin

"To learn how to learn, for learning- one word that includes singing, dancing, interacting and much more - is already becoming the main purpose of life."

George B. Leonard

"...to learn as their students should learn: through a self-directed encounter with meaningful problems."

Louis Rubin

"...in-service education must begin with perception, kindle the freedom and the lust to change, then provide a method and support, and end in the confirmation of newborn habits. In this form professional growth becomes self-transcendence."

Louis Rubin

"My first experience of tape-recording was very casual. It seemed vaguely like a good idea. I had no specific aims. This play-back of a class discussion was a shattering blow!"

June Green

*Have at least one new experience in the next week.

- Try a new sport, game or hobby.
- Make a new friend, or revive an old friendship.
- Spend an hour or more talking with someone from a different culture or racial background.
- Do something no one would expect you to do, not even yourself!
- Make a decision and act on it right away.

*Do action research and documentation in your classroom in order to clarify what you do in the classroom and explore its effect on children.

- Take note of a specific part of your classroom experience, over a period of time (or invite someone else to observe this element on a regular basis).
  - a child who puzzles you
  - the way children spend their time, the choices they make
  - the effect or results of a particular teaching method
  - the kinds of questions children ask
- Collect data related to a concern you have.
  - samples of a child's writing over a period of time
  - samples of children's art work
  - stories written by a child who is having emotional problems
  - video tape or tape record your class in action

Any other suggestions...?

Have you come across a statement or experience that has caused you to reflect about your teaching? Share it with one of your colleagues.

RISK

Gambling that you'll be successful in an attempt to work with children in a different manner. It is taking a chance and leaving yourself open to failure.

"There will be people whose teaching style will change with the years not simply because their skills have become more polished, nor because they have kept in touch with what the latest research says about how to teach (though they may have done that too), but because they have changed as people, because they see their world and themselves and their students and their subject matter differently than they did at other points in their career...because they have grown, not necessarily up, or out, or sideways but in all directions."

Philip Jackson

"Many of us have been trained not to respect our own thinking but to feel that we have to depend on the thinking of others.

Earl C. Kelley

"The real secret to my method is the teacher's devotion and enthusiasm."

Sybil Marshall

"Often teachers trying to implement change, which in theory cannot be faulted, find that in practice it produces chaos, or at least insecurity. The natural tendency in these circumstances is to revert back to the well tried methods which at least produce order and discipline (of sorts)."

Ford Teaching Project

"Simply 'having a new idea or feeling,' while important in its own right, is relatively inconsequential for affecting behavioral change. Translating an idea into action and experiencing its consequences count for much more and constitute the basis of personal (as

*Survey all the things you do in your classroom. List them according to priority. Proclaim a moratorium on the bottom 3/4 of your list. For a few weeks focus your attention and strength on the upper 1/4 of your list.

*Take out just one idea you've been stashing away in your "idea file" for the past few months. Use it tomorrow with children in your classroom, even if it's only with a few children.

*Initiate and support a program in which each teacher is expected to design a project to be carried out in their classroom over the year. Just imagine the possibilities.

- Organize a regular field trip schedule.
- Develop a spelling program to be used in lieu of the text.
- Establish a noon art program.
- Develop an inter-classroom book exchange.
- Invite high school language students to teach your children.

Is there a goal or purpose you have in your teaching that would be helped by using one of these suggestions?

opposed to 'academic') knowledge and learning. This last assumption points up the obvious importance of experience in shaping personal constructs and suggests that, if significant progress in teaching is to occur, teachers need a quality of experience supportive of personal exploration, experimentation and reflection."

Anne M. Bussis, Edward A. Chittenden

"I am up to whatever comes my way - including what I take on. I have something important to do and be in the world. I can separate what I feel and think from what is actually going on and make a wise decision. I can take responsibility for myself, not the world. I can find out who I am and be it."

Dorothy I. Seaberg

"Learning conditions which do not permit mistakes limit the (learner's) freedom and willingness to make his own choices. The very process of becoming involves the challenge of new experiences, of trying the unknown, and necessarily must result in mistakes. When children, teachers, and administrators accept errors as a natural part of the learning process, growth is facilitated."

Arthur Combs

"Life, at its best, is a flowing, changing process in which nothing is fixed...To experience this is both fascinating and a little frightening. I find I am at my best when I can let the flow of my experience carry me, in a direction which appears to be forward, toward goals of which I am but dimly aware..."

Carl Rogers

***Support one another's self-initiated plans.**

- **Bring a tropical fish to add to your neighbor teacher's growing aquarium - your children can plan a gesture like that.**
- **Express good feelings to each other - offer support when you like something someone else does with children in their classroom.**

***Provide ways for staff to verbalize apprehensions, problems and anger.**

- **A box to receive suggestions for staff meeting agendas**

***Initiate team plans**

- **Two teachers exchange classes for a special project or a day of teaching**

***Develop whole school plans**

- **An alternative grading system**
- **Plan a program to let children move into other classrooms for learning activities.**
- **A book, film or mural in which every class has a part**

Can you share with someone else your plans for an activity in your classroom?

What kinds of planning do you do?

WORKING PLANS

Implementing one's beliefs and intentions about teaching and learning; reflecting about the needs of individual children; organizing materials which support children's learning.

"If wishes were horses, beggars would ride.' Since they are not, since really to satisfy an impulse or interest means to work it out, and working it out involves running up against obstacles, becoming acquainted with materials, exercising ingenuity, patience, persistence, alertness, it of necessity involves discipline - ordering of power - and supplies knowledge."

John Dewey

"The teacher has done something for the child he could not do for himself, and the child knows it. He's involved in something new that has proved engrossing to him. If he thus learns that he has the competence to do something that he didn't know he could do, then, the teacher has been a very crucial figure in his life."

David Hawkins

"...the initiation of such learning rests not upon the teaching skills of the leader, not upon his scholarly knowledge of the field, not upon his curricular planning, not upon his wise use of audiovisual aids, not upon the programmed learning he utilizes, not upon his lectures and presentations, not upon an abundance of books, though each of these might at one time or another be utilized as an important resource. No, the facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learner."

Carl Rogers

What question does one of these statements cause you to consider?

*Plan and implement a change in your teaching practice.

Cross age tutoring

Use of learning centers

A variety of approaches to teaching reading

Multi-aged family grouping
Consider the advantages and disadvantages of gathering a multi-aged group of children into a self-contained classroom.

Explore ways to teach science or social studies without the textbook.

Find ways for turning some of the decisions about <u>what</u> will be learned and <u>how</u> it will be learned over to your children.

Experiment with a rearrangement of the furniture in your classroom.

Investigate ways students could possibly facilitate one another's learning.

What ideas do you have?

"Learning is not confined to the classroom; there are a great many trips designed to extend the children's experience and to provide experiences that can be used as a base for both language and cognitive development..."

Charles E. Silberman

"We should take advantage of children's innate curiousity about their natural and man-made environment and their involvement with their out-of-school lives. Clues have to be gathered by listening to and observing children. The staff needs to practice these observational skills with as much outside support as possible."

Brenda Engel

"A teacher needs to be capable of noticing what a child's eyes notice and capable of interpreting the words and acts by which he tries to communicate with you..."

David Hawkins

"I had a certain skill in being able to watch and listen to children and figure out how they were really seeing a problem. And this led to a certain ability to raise questions that made sense to them and to think of ... new activities which might correspond better to their way of seeing things."

Eleanor Duckworth

"...each teacher will come to know his own philosophy and, acknowledging it, will then seek to work out an appropriate methodology... the teacher learns to capitalize on his own strengths and to reconfirm certain of his own beliefs, while learning at the same time to recognize his own weaknesses and to test out new ideas. Personally, I do not believe there can ever be one right way to change or one right way to teach."

Charles H. Rathbone

"Teaching is both simple and complex. Much of it is simply common sense like a mother reading to her child. But good teaching is not without its subtle virtuosities. Like running a talk show, you must be able to deal with the task at hand."

Merrill Harmin, Tom Gregory

***Use the community as a resource.**

- **Invite local people to explain their jobs, the tools they use; how they spend their day; what sorts of things they do when they're not working.**
- **Visit a variety of community resources.**
- **Plan with a business for children to spend an extended time with them (maybe a week)- a sort of short term apprentice program.**

***Plan and implement a different evaluation and reporting system.**

- **Keep anecdotal records of children's classroom activities, behavior, interactions with other people.**
- **Regularly collect samples of children's work.**
- **Use narrative reporting and frequent formal and informal conferencing with parents and child.**
- **Hold parent conference in the classroom during the school day while the children are working.**
- **Meet with parents and children in their home.**

Do you have other suggestions?

It is impossible here to capture the range and diversity of possible classroom working plans. The possibilities are infinite. Issues that puzzle, concerns that occupy our thoughts and imaginations, problems that demand our energy vary from person to person. Our working plans will reflect these multiple and individual differences.

Do you find any of the statements below helpful?

CONFLICT

Experiencing personal uneasiness and anxiety when dealing with risk taking. Finding the internal and external resources and strength to resolve puzzling questions and apprehensions.

"Self-monitoring, or allowing another to monitor one's classroom results in a continuous realization that the solution of one set of problems only exposes a range of fresh ones. The teacher realizes that he can never just sit back and rest on his past achievements. As one of our teachers has written:

'Nothing is ever in a state of stasis, nothing is ever finalized, always there is reappraisal in the light of new experiences. Like children, we hanker after a finiteness of things, and like children, we are disturbed when there is frequent reassessment and modification.'"

Ford Teaching Project

"The edge of the sea is a strange and beautiful place...For no two successive days is the shoreline precisely the same...Always the edge of the sea remains an elusive and indefinable boundary."

Rachel Carson

"Growth demands a willingness to relinquish one's proficiences."

William Sloane Coffin

"Just what is it that is supposed to keep us all imprisoned in what we happened to look like yesterday? So yesterday I wore a blue suit. So today I am expected to wear a blue suit. So tomorrow they can call me Mr. Bluesuit."

James Keys

"When we are free from external tryannies, we seek freedom from our inner limitations."

M. C. Richards

*Listen to yourself.

- Reflect on what you're doing in your classroom and how you feel about it.
- Take to task your questions, anxieties, successes and certainties.
- Plan ways of working with problems.
- Sustain and develop your successes.

*Arrange parent information and planning meetings.

- Discuss and explain the use of manipulative materials in your math program.
- Solicit parents' help in making classroom games and furniture.

*Design a community awareness program.

- Plan an education fair to display children's work, teaching materials and a variety of teaching styles.

"There seems little doubt that teachers' attitudes and expectations play a major role in determining classroom results."

Ann Cook, Herb Mack

"We believe many things not because the things are so, but because we have become habituated through the weight of authority, by imitation, prestige, instruction, the unconscious effect of language, etc."

John Dewey

"What makes a good day?

1. *Flexibility*
2. *My good mood*
3. *Meeting the children's needs and requests*
4. *Exciting activities*
5. *Quiet times and loud times*
6. *Taking advantage of the weather for projects*
7. *Off-the-cuff when the time and excitement is right*
8. *Excitement and interest on my own part*
9. *My being organized as well as being ready for the unexpected*
10. *Creative activities*
11. *Not too much seat work*

What makes a troublesome day?

1. *My being crabby*
2. *The program being too rigid*
3. *Not stopping when the children are bored*
4. *Too many noise activities in a row*

Comments:

I was surprised to find out how much I determined what the day would be like."

Dorothy Seaberg

"Not only is there no specific time at which a person becomes a teacher, but there is also no definable time at which a teacher stops becoming one. This is simply another way of saying that there is no such thing as the 'complete' teacher... In teaching, as in life, the roads to wisdom are many."

Philip W. Jackson

*Organize and involve yourself in a teacher support group.

.Talk regularly with someone (an individual or a small group) about personal conflicts and questions concerning your teaching.

.Take the time to respond to your own teaching and learning; your own growth needs.

*Keeping a personal journal or log

- Be aware of and make note of specific behavior, or situations, or feelings you have through the teaching day.
- Draw generalizations about what you notice - check out your conclusions with more observation.
- Use the log to help determine directions in which you would like to move.

Other suggestions?

Some concluding thoughts...

"That unit on early pioneers in Minnesota really turned out well. The children are becoming good planners. Many of their ideas are excellent - far better than mine. Making the log cabins out of twigs and muddy clay really highlights our unit. I had fun, too, when I shared a couple of things I found out about early farms in Minnesota. The kids enjoyed trying to card wool with those old wool cards. Their paintings and writings were really more full of spirit than in any other project we have done. Taking extra time with kids, finding out what they would like to do, how they want to organize it, how I respond to the topic and the directions set by the kids has helped me find ways to work with them that I find more satisfying. It is really good for me and the kids."

"My problems aren't solvable in a day or even a year. I'm beginning to realize that there are days I feel good about and other days when it doesn't go as well - days when kids seem directed and energetic and days when they are more aimless. A group of kids are creating lively puppet shows from inside that painted refrigerator box. Little Charlotte, who hardly ever speaks, finds a voice for her puppet. That's exciting! With that kind of activity finding expression, I find courage to experiment with this idea of providing ways for children to make decisions about their own learning. It's essential for me to feel comfortable with the plans I implement. I've started keeping a log, recording the choices kids make, how long they stick with their choices, and the results of their work. My feelings still rise and fall but I'm finding a way to evaluate more objectively what we're doing. And most important I'm learning to be patient with myself. My growth seems to occur in spurts. It waxes and wanes and surely develops over a long period of time. Maybe that's true for Wayne and Morris too."

"Take time to grow? A few days ago I doubted if I could find even a moment or two to talk about my concerns with others. Now I realize I must! How do I arrange my day so I can find just a little bit of time? When I find the time where do I start? Maybe I should try some of the suggestions in the section on parent, teacher, child interviews; but who would be the interviewer? Maybe Mrs. King would take some time and help me. She always seems friendly and supportive. I feel I can trust her. Funny but now that I'm thinking about things I can do I don't feel so alone anymore and my problems don't seem so large anymore."

"I think someone wise once said, 'frustration breeds success.' If someone didn't - they should have because that's what happened to me. I wanted to understand how I could help myself grow as a teacher: One afternoon a teacher friend and I had a long discussion during which I shared some of my frustrations. He pointed out that I need to start with one idea, develop a plan and carry through until I could see progress in my classroom. I did just that and have continued to do so - one step at a time. Now I'm saying new things, seeing new things and doing new things - I'm growing!"

APPENDIX A

Teacher, Parent, Child Interviews as a Basis for Staff Development

T: What are the Teacher, Parent and Child Interviews?

I: The three interviews are tools developed by people at the Center for Teaching and Learning for use with classroom teachers. Together the interviews provide teachers with an opportunity to think about their teaching experience and to look at their classroom through the eyes of their children and parents.

T: What about the Teacher Interview, what is it all about?

I: The Teacher Interview helps you to look at what you believe about teaching and learning and helps you to talk about what you're doing in your classroom. It helps you to see how things happen in your room, what activities are taking place and how you look at what's happening. It also helps you to think about how you relate to children and how children in your classroom feel about each other and how they feel about you.

T: How does it do that?

I: The interview is a series of questions. The questions ask you to consider these things:

*the way you put your classroom together

*the way you plan your day

*how you and the children determine what children know and need

*how you view and handle the problems children have within your classroom

*how you feel about your children and how they feel about you

*what you believe about children and their learning and how you find ways to put these beliefs into practice

*how parents feel about what you're doing

*how you make use of the community

T: You know, often I do things with my children because somebody else thinks it's important. Maybe I do need to spend some time thinking about these questions so that the things that the children and I do in our classroom will be the result of what I believe to be important about children and the way they learn.

I: Yes, I think these questions will help you to do that. Another thing the Teacher Interview does is to provide a framework which helps you to determine where you are in your teaching in relation to where you'd like to be. This framework we call "dimensions of teaching." There are seven dimensions, Diversification, Individualization, Formality-Informality, Centralization-Decentralization, Peer Interaction, Community as a Resource, and Integration. (A description of each dimension is attached to Appendix B, the Teacher Interview.)

After the interview is over we look at all the ideas you've discussed in terms of each dimension. This helps to organize the large amount of material you've discussed. For example, you and the interviewer talk about all the things you described that relate to "individualization." Then using the seven forms or approaches to individualization you select which best describes what you're doing in your classroom. And from there you can decide, "Is that where I want to be?" and if not "Where would I like to be and how can I get there?" You and the interviewer are able then to begin sharing specific ideas which might help you to move in the direction you'd like to go.

T: This sounds really exciting but scary too. I would sure need to feel comfortable with the person interviewing me.

I: Yes, it's very important that you feel safe with the person who is interviewing you. You need to feel that your ideas will be respected. After all this interview is to help you explore <u>your</u> ideas and to help you develop in the ways that you want to grow.

T: Have you used this interview with any other teachers?

I: Yes, the interview has been used with hundreds of teachers. Here are some of their reactions to their experience.

"As a result of the Teacher Interview I felt more successful in some of the things I had been trying. Encouragement means so very much to teachers."

"The nature and flow or sequence of the questions seemed to stimulate a progression of thought about my classroom. The questions helped to pinpoint details I would have overlooked."

"The questions helped me to think beyond the day to day grind. I had time to think more broadly about my purposes in education."

"The style of questioning brought out the best in a teacher. It certainly helped me to see myself in perspective. It was really a self-analytical experience."

"I know more about myself as a teacher than I've ever known. How can you improve on that."

"The Teacher Interview experience was like keeping a journal and actually reading it from the beginning. I remembered many positive things and saw how much growth we really had achieved."

I: There are several ways the Teacher Interview can be used.

*select someone you trust to be your interviewer - a fellow teacher, a school administrator or counselor, a parent, a child, a friend.

*use the questions from the Teacher Interview or the Dimensions of Teaching as a beginning for discussion at a staff meeting. Select one question or one dimension to hash over as a group.

*keep a private jounral or log book in which you write your observations about what happens in your classroom in reference to each dimension.

*questions could be used for discussion with a teacher-support-group. You select a group of 4-5 people with whom you feel comfortable (a teacher friend, a parent, maybe even a child) and at regular meetings you share with them concerns you have about your teaching.

T: Tell me about the Children's Interview.

I: The Children's Interview helps you to get a picture of your classroom from the children's point of view. It helps you to understand what children do in the classroom that they like to do, don't like to do, or wish they could do. It's a way of finding out what they think about you as a teacher, how they feel about other children, and how they work or help other children. It's a way of discovering children's interests and what they would like to learn. It also helps you get a sense of what kind of communication children have with their parents about their school experience.

In general it helps you to see how (1) the child's involvement in activities, (2) you as the teacher, (3) other children in the classroom, and (4) the classroom atmosphere contribute to children's learning.

T: How do I use the Children's Interview?

I: The interview can be used in a variety of ways.

*select a part of the children in your classroom (like every-other-one). An outside person interviews this sample of children using the questions on the Children's Interview. Then the interviewer summarizes what the children have said and shares it with you.

*use the questions to interview children yourself. You may want to use just a few of the questions with just a few children whom you might be having some difficulty understanding.

*use questions for group discussion with your children. (See Appendix C for more information about use with groups of children.)

T: How about the Parent's Interview? How can it be helpful to me?

I: The Parent Interview is intended to complement the teacher's and children's interview. The Parent Interview helps you understand how your children's

parents view your classroom and what attitudes and feelings they have about their children's school experience. It deals specifically with: (1) what parents know about your curriculum and teaching methods as well as the relationship you have with children, (2) parent's reactions to your classroom - likes, dislikes, questions and concerns, (3) what parents expect teachers and schools to do for children. (Appendix D provides an example of a Parent Interview used in a Follow Through site. It was designed, in large measure, by parents and teachers in that local community and responds to questions and concerns important to them. It may well be a starting point for you.)

T: I wonder how willing parents would be to participate in an interview like that?

I: In our experience of using the Parent Interview with thousands of parents across the country we find that parents welcome and appreciate the chance to talk in detail about their child's school experiences.

It is interesting to see that the more information a parent seems to have about a classroom the more supportive he/she seems to be of the teacher's program. The experience of participating in the interview seems to spark interest in the parents concerning their children's education. Parents who don't have much information become curious and comment that they plan to talk more with their child's teacher.

T: How do you arrange to talk with parents in this way?

I: Like the Teacher and Children's Interviews, the Parent Interview can be used in a variety of ways.

*select an outside person (principal, another teacher...) to interview a part of your parents. The interviewer summarizes the information and shares it with you. We have found the best interviewing occurs when parents are assured that their name will not be connected to any information the interviewer shares with you.

*select a few parents to talk with personally using questions from the interview as suggestions for discussion.

*use questions as a starting point for discussion at parent meetings.

*change the interview, create new questions which respond to your individual classroom needs and concerns.

*parents can interview other parents.

*children can interview parents.

T: You know, this seems like it might be a way I could begin to look at myself and the way I teach and work with children. I need to get together with some other people interested in children so that we might make some plans.

APPENDIX B

Teacher Interview

Which questions would you like most to respond to?

TEACHER INTERVIEW

Question	Probes
1. Let's begin with a description of your classroom. As a stranger, what would I see if I walked into your room? How is the room arranged or organized?	a. What would I see as I looked around the room at the walls? b. How is the furniture arranged? c. Where is your desk? d. (as an area is mentioned, i.e., science, ask:) What kinds of things are there? e. Where do they come from? f. How often are they used? g. What kinds of books and resource materials are in your classroom?
1a. Has the arrangement of the room changed any over the course of the year? How has it changed?	a. How did these changes come about?
2. We know that no two days are alike, but we'd like to get a general picture of what a typical teaching day is like. Would you describe for us how a day is organized?	a. When would you usually do that? b. How long would that usually last? c. Are there specific times scheduled for things like art, music, and physical education? When?
2a. Has the organization of the day changed any over the course of the year? (If yes:) In what ways?	a. Has the amount of time you spend on various things changed? (If yes:) How? b. How do you feel about these changes?
3. Let's change our focus now. Could you discuss the sorts of things that you want your children to learn? In other words, what areas of learning are important to you as a teacher?	
3a. Okay, you mentioned (list the areas of importance mentioned). Now, let's talk about how you try to accomplish these in terms of specific activities. Let's start with (select one of the areas mentioned). What sorts of things do your children do in _____?	a. How do these activities get started? b. How are the children organized during these activities? I mean, if I came in while that was going on what would I see--children working alone, in small groups, or all together as a class? c. How many children would be involved in these activities? d. What would the other children be doing during that time? e. How often would these activities go on in the classroom, or how often has that happened? f. What would you be doing while these activities were going on? g. What materials or resources are used during these activities?

Question	Probes
3a. (continued)	h. Where do these materials or resources come from? i. How do you evaluate progress in these activities? j. Are there any other things that are related to that area that you haven't described yet that would help give us a picture of your classroom during these activities? k. What kinds of things do you do in your classroom that contribute to the emotional and social development of children?
3b. Thinking about all the activities, materials, and resources you've already described, are there any other important activities, materials or resources that have been a part or are now a part of your classroom--things that we haven't talked about yet?	(If yes:) a. How are these used? b. When would that happen? or, When would that be used? c. How often has that happened? or, How often has that been used this year?
4. Do you find ways of integrating the learning activities in your classroom? (for example: reading activities with science?)	a. Can you describe the way that happens ? b. How often does that happen? c. Does it occur in other areas as well?
4a. How has the integration of learning activities changed over the course of the year?	a. Why has there been change? b. How do you feel about that?
4b. Considering your goals as a teacher how important is integration to you?	
5. In your classroom how are children involved in making decisions about their learning?	a. Can you describe how this happens? b. How many children are involved in doing that? c. When would that take place? d. How often has this kind of thing happened?
5a. From your experience this year how well do you feel elementary school children handle situations involving choice?	a. Thinking of all the children in your classroom, how many of them are consistently able to direct their own learning activities by making their own decisions about what to do, if given the opportunity to do so? b. What kinds of problems do children have in making their own decisions between alternatives?
5b. Considering your goals, how important is it for children to be involved in making decisions about their learning?	
6. How are you able to find ways of responding to the individual differences in children? Can you describe some of the ways in which you do that?	a. How do you capitalize on the interests children bring with them to school? b. How do children feel about their classroom experiences?

Question	Probes
6a. How has the degree of individualization in your classroom changed over the course of the year?	a. To what do you attribute these changes? b. How do you feel about that?
6b. Would you say that individualization is a practical goal for a teacher in your situation?	
7. Has it been possible to use people, places or things here in the community as a basis for learning activities and experiences?	(If yes:) a. Would you describe how people or things in the community have been used? b. How often has this kind of thing happened? c. How many children are usually involved in these things?
8a. You've described the major activities that go on in the classroom, now we'd like to focus a bit more on how you personally spend your time in the classroom. Would you describe for us what your day is like beginning with your arrival at school in the morning?	
8b. Has your personal day--the way you spend your time in the classroom--changed any over the course of the year?	
8c. What kinds of things do you do outside of class time to prepare for school?	
8d. Is there anything you would like to add to what you've already described that would help give us a picture of what your day as a teacher is like--how you as a teacher spend your time?	
9a. We'd now like to ask you some questions about how the children relate to one another. From your observations of the children in the classroom, would you describe how they behave towards each other?	(Clarification, if necessary:) a. There's no one particular thing we're looking for in this question. We'd like to get a description in your own words of how the children interact. For example, if I were another teacher and you were telling me about the children's interaction with each other, what would you say? How do they help or hinder each other? b. How many of the children does that description fit? c. How much of the time would you say that is true?
9b. What roles do you feel competition and cooperation should play in the classroom?	a. Do you find the words competition and cooperation useful in describing children's behavior and classroom interaction?

Question	Probes
9b. (continued)	b. Can you describe activities in your room which promote competition? Which promote cooperation? c. How do you feel about the role competition and cooperation play in your classroom?
10. Have you noticed any particular differences in the way boys and girls work and participate in the classroom?	a. Are there some things that only boys seem to do, and other things that only girls seem to do? b. Have any differences between boys and girls affected what goes on in the classroom?
11. What rules are there in the classroom about things that should <u>not</u> be or things that should be done? (If no response:) Maybe "rules" is too strong a word. What we're looking for are behaviors or norms that ~~are~~ supposed to be avoided--or procedures that are followed at certain times--or kinds of behavior that are considered inappropriate or undesirable in the classroom?	a. How did these rules or norms come about? b. How do the children respond to these rules (or norms)? c. Have the rules (or norms) in the classroom changed any over the course of the year?
11a. What happens when a rule isn't followed, or when a norm is broken?	
11b. How are discipline problems generally handled in the classroom?	(Clarification, if necessary:) a. If a situation arises where a child or a group of children are disturbing others, what would be done?
12. Now we'd like to change the subject a bit and talk about your goals. As a teacher this year, what have been your major goals?	
12a. Have your goals changed any over the course of the year?	(If yes:) a. What are the reasons they've changed?
13. Now there's another area concerning the classroom that we'd like to explore--and that is the relationship that you, as a teacher, have with the children.	a. How do you think the children see you? b. What kinds of interactions do you have with the children?
14. Now, we'd like you to reflect upon opportunities you may have to talk about important aspects of your teaching experience with others. For example, with teachers in your building, with your principal, or others at conferences or meetings? (Pause) Are there persons you try out your ideas on; ask for help; share both your doubts and failures as well as your aspirations and accomplishments as a teacher? Could you give some examples?	a. How valuable are these opportunities to you? b. Do you wish there were more opportunities to talk with others about your teaching? c. How could this be made to happen more often? d. In general, do you feel that the kind of things you are trying to do in your classroom is understood and supported in your school?

Question	Probes
Now we'd like to completely change focus for a moment--this time away from the internal workings of the classroom to the community-at-large, focusing particularly on the parents of the children in your classroom.	
15. What kinds or forms of contact have you had with parents over the course of the year?	a. How often have you had contact with parents in that way? b. Why was the contact made?
15a. Based on your contact with parents, what would you say are or have been their major concerns about school this year?	a. How many parents are worried about these things? b. What has happened to make you aware of these concerns?
16. On the whole, how well do you think parents understand what your classroom is all about--why it's the way it is--and what you're trying to accomplish?	
We'd like to move away from talking about parents and try to get an overall evaluation of the things you've done and how you feel about your teaching experiences this year.	
17. Teachers and interns we've interviewed have told us that every teacher has ups and downs. What is a good day like for you?	
17a. And what about a "down" day? What is "not such a good day" like for you?	
18. Could you describe any ways in which your experience in the classroom has influenced your personal life?	
19. Are there any major things that you've done in the classroom that you would change if you were starting over again?	a. How would you make that change?
20. How satisfied are you thus far that you've been able to accomplish what you wanted to this year?	a. What has been your major source of dissatisfaction? b. What has been your major source of satisfaction?
21. Are you finding time to broaden your personal interests, expand your reading, be with people, etc?	a. How do you feel about that?
We'd like to shift our focus now to thinking about the growth of individual children in your classroom. Could you select the 10th child in your class list. Think about that	

Question	Probes
person for a moment. Now, could you tell me something about him/her?	
22. How would you assess the quality of his/her learning?	
22a. How would you characterize the quality of his/her thinking? (examples?)	
22b. What kinds of questions does he/she raise in the classroom? (examples?)	
22c. Does he/she select projects and activities that challenge him/her to think? (examples?)	
22d. What does he/she seem to value highly? What are his/her strongly held beliefs? Does he/she seem aware of those values, beliefs?	
22e. How does he/she interact with other children?	
22f. How does he/she react to rules?	

Classroom:_____ Coder's Name:_____

Dimensions--Teacher's Interview

1. Diversification

T-Actual 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 T-Ideal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The range of forms of learning stimuli incorporated into the activities, curriculum and experiences of the children in the classroom. (This does not necessarily imply incorporation of alternatives or options.)

2. Individualization

T-Actual 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 T-Ideal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The degree to which the cognitive and affective (emotional) needs of an individual can be met, including the degree to which children's needs can be made known and dealt with openly.

3. Formality-Informality

T-Actual 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 T-Ideal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The degree to which the interaction between students and the teacher is based upon their respective status positions, and the degree to which those status positions are defined in terms of institutionalized patterns of interaction or stabilized/rigidified role expectations.

4. Centralization

T-Actual 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 T-Ideal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The degree to which decision-making is in the hands of the teacher in the classroom, i.e., the degree to which the teacher makes decisions about what happens in the classroom. The completely centralized classroom is one where the teacher makes all of the decisions. The completely decentralized classroom is one where the children have total responsibility for what happens in the classroom.

5. Integration

T-Actual 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 T-Ideal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The degree to which the activities in the classroom are interrelated together into a relatively thematic whole whereby cognitive and affective skill development occurs in the context of the search for knowledge, information and understanding about the real world of the children.

6. Community-as-Resource

T-Actual 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 T-Ideal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The degree to which there is no door or wall between the classroom and its community environment, i.e., the degree to which the people, places and things in the community are a meaningful resource for the classroom--a resource for both, teaching and learning activities.

7. Peer Interaction

T-Actual 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 T-Ideal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
I 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The degree to which the activities, curriculum, physical arrangement, and organization of the classroom contribute to peer interaction as an experiential basis for children to learn from and teach each other.

APPENDIX C

And What Do You Think?

Children's Interview

Which questions do you think your children would like most to talk about?

AND WHAT DO YOU THINK?
CHILDREN'S INTERVIEW

1. Tell me all the things that you (emphasis) can do in your classroom. (If child answers "work," clarify by asking: What do you mean by work? If child answers only that they work, ask: What can you do when you finisn your work?)

   a. Are there some things that other kids do that you don't do? What are those things?

   b. What are the things that you have to d Are there times that you can choose what you want to do? When?

   c. Are there some things that only boys can do? Why can only boys do this/the things?

   d. Are there some things that only girls can do? Why can only girls do this/ these things?

2. You've told me all about the things you can do in the classroom, now tell me how you spend your time in the classroom? What things do you do?

   a. What do you really like to do best in the classroom? Tell me one thing.

   b. How did you get started on this?

   c. (Sense of where it went.) Example. What happened when you finished with i

3. How many teachers do you have in your classroom? (Establish which works most closely with and if more than one ask the following for each: "What does _____ do in your classroom?"

   a. What does he/she like to do best? When is he/she the happiest?

   b. When do you talk to the teachers? What do you talk about?

   c. Does the teacher talk to you about what you're doing? (If mentioned conferences above, ask: Does the teacher talk to you about other things you do?

   d. Is it ever hard for you to ask the teachers the questions you have? If yes, ask: What makes it hard to ask questions?

   e. (If did not mention helping above, ask here.) Do the teachers help you? When do they help you or, tell me some ways the teacher helps you. What are some other things the teachers could do to help you?

4. Is there something that you would like to do that you haven't done yet? Why haven't you been able to do this?

5. Tell me something that you would like to learn or know more about. (Follow-up only on activities which are somewhere in the realm of actually being able to occur.)

   a. Could you do that in your classroom?

   b. How would you go about it?

   c. What things in your room would help you?

   d. How could the teachers help you?

6. Can you bring things into the classroom from outside of school if you want to? If no, ask Why?

   a. Do you ever do that?

   b. What things have you brought in?

   c. What did you do with that? What happened to it?

   d. Tell me one thing you would like to have in your classroom that's not there now?

   e. How would that make your classroom better?

7. Do you ever work or do things with other kids?

   a. What kinds of things do you do with other kids?

   b. How does it help you to work with others?

c. Do you usually work with other children or by yourself?

d. Would you like to spend more time alone or working with other kids?

8. Do you help other children do things in the classroom?

a. What do you help them do?

b. How do you help them? (Ask if not answered in a.)

c. How do other children help you? (Difference between this question and 7-a.)

9. Are there times when it's hard to work because of other children?

a. When is it hard?

b. What do the children do that makes it hard for you to work? (Probe for things like noise level, interruptions.)

c. Do they do this a lot? Or does this happen a lot? (Depends on answers a.&b.

d. What do you do when they do this or when this happens?

10. Do you have projects (depends upon classroom) going on in this room? Tell me what a project is.

a. Name some projects that go on in your classroom.

b. How do they get started?

c. Do you ever think about something that you would like to have as a project? What?
How did you get interested in that?

d. Did you do the project? (If no, probe why.)

e. Do you like doing projects? What is it about doing projects that you like? Tell me something you've learned from doing a project.

11. What are the things you can't do in your room?

a. Do you think it's good that you can't do some of these things?

b. (If yes.) Why do you think it's good?

c. Tell me something you can't do that you would like to do.

12. What would you like for the teachers not to do (stop doing) that they do now?

a. What would you like for the teachers to start doing that they don't do now?

13. Do you have a favorite place in your classroom? Where?

a. Why do you like this place best?

b. Are there places in the room you don't like? Why don't you like these places?

c. Can you usually find a place to work in the classroom? Where is that?

14. Is your classroom different from other rooms you've had before?

a. How is it different?

b. How do you feel about that?

15. How would you like to make your classroom different? (If no answer: Are there any places in the classroom you would like different?)

a. How would changing that make your classroom better?

b. Could you change it, make it different?

c. How would you go about it?

d. What do you like most about your classroom?

e. What do you like least about your classroom?

16. Who decides what happens in your classroom? (Add only if necessary: for example, what you can do, where you can sit, when you can do something?)

17. Is there anyone who tells you that there are things you should be doing in school?

a. What do they think you should be doing?

18. Are there times when you don't want to come to school?

a. How do you feel then? (What is it that makes you not want to come to school?)

19. When you're in school, what is the best part of the day for you?

20. Ask the child if he/she has any questions to ask you.

APPENDIX D

Parent Interview

I: The first few questions are about _____. (Name)

Sex of child: Male 1
Female.....2

1. How old is _____.

2. How are you related to _____ _____.

Mother 1
(including foster mother, stepmother, adopted mother)
Grandmother.....2
Aunt.....3
Other (Specify).....4

I: Now we'd like to ask you some questions about _____'s classroom this year.

3. What grade is your child in this year?

K _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____
(If child is in kindergarten, go to Question 5)

4. If child is in the first, second or third grade ask:

Has _____ been in a Follow Through classroom before?

Yes.....1
No.....2
Don't know.....3
(No Response).....4

4a. How many years?

1_____ 2 _____ 3 _____

5. Now I would like to have you describe _____'s classroom. Have you ever been in _____'s classroom?

If yes, ask:

If you were describing the classroom to another person, what are the things that you would be likely to mention?

Suggested probes (use only if parent is familiar with classroom).

How would you describe the way the classroom looks/the way it is organized?

How do you feel about this?

What kinds of materials are in the room?

How do you feel about this?

What kinds of activities are the children involved in?

How do you feel about this?

In what ways are subject areas taught?

How do you feel about this?

How does the teacher spend his/her time in the classroom?

How do you feel about this?

6. Now we'd like you to summarize your overall attitude about _____'s classroom. Considering <u>all</u> things that you know about his/her classroom this year, what do you think of it?

7. Do you have any suggestions as to how to improve _____'s classroom? (If not already answered)

I: The next set of questions are about _____'s reactions to school this year.

8. First, have you noticed any change in the way _____ behaves at home this year?

Yes.....1
No.....2
No Response.....3

(If no, probe:) No change at all?

(If yes:) Would you describe the changes you've noticed?

(Probe:) Any others that come to mind?

9. How does _____ feel about school this year?

10. How do you feel _____ has progressed in school this year?

11. Do you and _____ talk about school? How often?

Almost every day.....1
Twice a week.....2
Once a week.....3
Once or twice a month.....4
Less often than that.....5
Never.....6
No Response.....7

12. What are some of the things that _____ says he/she really <u>likes</u> about school?
(Probe: What other things?)

13. What are some of the things that _____ says he/she really does not like about school?
(Probe: What other things?)

14. Have you gone to scheduled parent-teacher conferences this year?

Yes _____
No _____
No Response _____

A. (If so) How valuable have the parent-teacher conferences been to you?

What do you like about them?

What don't you like about them?

15. Have you had any informal contacts with _____'s teacher, other than in the scheduled parent-teacher conferences?

Yes _____
No _____
No Response _____

16. Who is _____'s teacher?

Name _____

17. What are the most important things that you think a teacher should do to help a child learn in school?

18. Considering what you've just said about what is important, how good a job do you think your child's teacher has done this year in helping your child learn these things? Would you say that your child's teacher this year has done:

An excellent job.....1
A good job.....2
A fair job.....3
A poor job.....4
No Response.....5 (Don't read)

(Ask Question 19 only if child is in 3rd grade. If child is in K, 1 or 2 go to Question 22.)

19. Will _____ go into a fourth grade that follows a similar approach to instruction?

Yes _____ (go to question 22)

No _____ (go to question 20)

I don't know _____ (go to question 21)

20. How do you feel about that?

21. Would you like _____ to go in into a similar type classroom?
child's name

Yes _____
No _____

Describe:

22. Have you ever worked or helped in _____'s classroom at school?

Yes (Ask A, B & C).....1
No (Skip to #23).....2

A. How often have you worked or helped in the classroom?

B. How much do you like going into the classroom?

Like it very much.....1
Like it somewhat.....2
Dislike it somewhat.....3
Dislike it very much....4

C. Is this the first year that you've ever helped in one of your child's classrooms or have you helped in your children's classrooms before?

First year.....1
Helped before.....2

23. Has your husband had a chance to observe or work in the classroom?

Yes _____
No _____
How many times _____?

24. Have you every attended any school meetings, community meetings, or organization meetings where the Follow Through Program was discussed?

Yes.....1
No.....2
No Response.....3

25. If a friend asked you to briefly describe the Follow Through Program, could you tell him/her what it is?

Yes _____
No _____
Maybe or Don't Know _____

(If no go on to #26)
A. In your own words, how would you describe the Follow Through Program?

26. Are there any additional comments you would like to make?

RESPONSE FORM

1. How have you made use of this Staff Development Workbook?

2. (a) What sections did you find especially useful? Why?

   (b) What sections were not particularly useful? Why?

3. What kinds of additions would make this workbook more useful for the purposes of staff development?

4. What is your role in the school?

   _____teacher _____principal _____curriculum specialist or consultant _____other

Please return to Vito Perrone, Center for Teaching & Learning, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58202.